



REGULUS

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1994

NEWSLETTER OF THE KINGSTON CENTRE
OF THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA

MEETINGS AND EVENTS HORIZON

Regular Meetings of the Kingston Centre, RASC, are held on the **second Friday** of each month (unless noted otherwise) at **8 p.m.**, in **Room B-201, Mackintosh-Corry Hall, Queen's University**. **Non-members are welcome.** Executive Council Meetings are at 7 p.m.

Fri., Sept. 9 **REGULAR MEETING—MEMBERS' NIGHT.**
Short talks by members on their observations and/or other topics.

Fri., Oct 14 **ANNUM MEETING & ELECTIONS.**
Speaker, Doug Clapp. "Virtual Observing with "The Sky" and "Sky-Pro"

Fri., Nov. 11 **REGULAR MEETING.**
Speaker, Dr. Richard Henriksen, Queen's University. Topic to be announced.

OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

HONORARY PRESIDENT: David Levy, (000) 000-0000
PAST-PRESIDENT: Christine Kulyk, (000) 000-0000
PRESIDENT: Walter MacDonald, (000) 000-0000
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NEWSLETTER: Bill Broderick, (000) 000-0000
LIBRARIAN: Kevin Kell, (000) 000-0000
NATIONAL COUNCIL
REPRESENTATIVE: Walter MacDonald, (000) 000-0000
ALTERNATE REP: Kevin Kell, (000) 000-0000

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EDUCATION: Denise Sabatini, (000) 000-0000
PUBLICITY: Bill Broderick, (000) 000-0000
OBSERVING: Steven Manders, (000) 000-0000
OBSERVING SITE: Steven Manders, (000) 000-0000
LIGHT POLLUTION: Bill Broderick, (000) 000-0000
ASTRONOMY DAY: Ian Levstein, (000) 000-0000
G.A. BID: Peggy Torney, (000) 000-0000

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SUBSCRIPTIONS: Members of the Centre receive **Regulus** as a benefit of membership. Non-members may subscribe for \$10 per year.

ADVERTISING: Classified advertisements re items to buy, sell, or trade, are free to members of the Centre. Commercial advertising is \$25 per half page, \$50 for full page. Commercial advertisers must provide clean, camera-ready copy.

CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME: Articles, notes on observations, humour, poetry, artwork, anything on astronomy or related topics, are invited. Submitted material may be edited for brevity or clarity. Contributions should be sent to the **Editor** as follows:

Bill Broderick
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Shannonville, Ontario K0K 3A0

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OUR KINGSTON PHONE NO.: (000) 000-0000

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NOTE: The new membership year starts October 1. That means **dues are due** very soon. See notices on pages 6 and 7 of this newsletter. Your cooperation will be very much appreciated by our hard-working Treasurer Kim Hay.

THE JULY 1994 NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

By Walter MacDonald, National Council Rep

Two national council meetings and the annual meeting were held in St. John's, Newfoundland over the Canada Day Weekend. As the numerous (and time consuming) controversies that dominated previous council meetings continue to fade away into the past, council meetings have become shorter and more productive. Thus it would appear that a 2-day council meeting will not be a necessity in the foreseeable future! Anyway, here are the highlights from the St. John's meetings...

The Society's executive and committees underwent significant change this year: elections were held for 1st and 2nd VP, various appointments were made, and committees either disbanded or reconstituted. Here are the more notable changes:

Elections:

- * Peter Ceravolo (Ottawa) was elected to 2nd VP
- * Doug George (Ottawa) was elected to 1st VP
- * Doug Hube (Edmonton) succeeded Peter Broughton (Toronto) by acclamation

Appointments:

- * Peter Jedicke (London Centre) was appointed by council for a three year term as recorder. Peter replaces Mary Anne Harrington (Toronto), who has just completed a similar term.
- * Walter MacDonald (Kingston) replaced Garry Woodcock (Hamilton) as Librarian, starting a three year term.
- * Rajiv Gupta (Vancouver) was appointed as Treasurer for a one year term, filling the vacancy left by the resignation of Terry Hicks (Kingston).

Committees:

- * Centennial Committee was disbanded
- * Membership Survey Committee was disbanded
- * Beginner's Observing Guide Marketing Committee was disbanded
- * Solar Eclipse 1994 Committee will be disbanded in October (after final report)
- * Long Range Planning Committee was NOT disbanded
- * Two new committees were formed: "Publications Revitalization" and "Elections Procedures"

Publications continue to be the subject of much discussion. Here's the latest:

* Roy Bishop (Halifax) reported that Observer's Handbook sales are down by about 10% this year, so there will be a decrease in next year's press run. 1995 pricing for the handbook will be the same as for this year's edition. An ad may be run in Astronomy magazine again, if a sufficiently "sexy" ad can be designed. It was suggested that Franklin "Sexmeister" Loehde could be of assistance in this regard.

* Rajiv Gupta reported that 1050 of the 1400 1994 RASC Observer's Calendars had been sold and that a profit had been realized on the project. A production run of 1000 calendars was approved for 1995.

* A discussion paper on "A New Publication of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada" was tabled by Dave Lane (Halifax). Anyone with a strong interest in this area should obtain a copy of this paper, either through their Centre rep or from Dave directly.

Bob King (Calgary) proposed the establishment of a "110 Finest NGC Objects Certificate" to be awarded to those who had observed all 110 of the Finest NGC objects as listed in the Observer's Handbook. This was approved.

The next national council meeting will be in Toronto on October 29th.

ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTIONS COMING UP

Our next meeting, on October 14, will be our **Annual Meeting**, the occasion when we elect our **officers** and **executive council** and hand out **committee chairmanships** and such. It's always an important meeting and one which every member should take very seriously. We can't all be kings and captains but we certainly can take an interest in who fills these positions and the jobs that they do.

One job that someone might like to think about is the **editorship** of this newsletter. The incumbent has been wearing this hat since 1990—for five years—and while he gets a great deal of enjoyment and satisfaction from it, the time may have come for someone else to take over. He won't be here for the Annual Meeting—October 14 is the day he returns from more than three weeks in Europe. He would welcome the news that someone else has decided to see what they can do as **editor**.

Apropos the topic of the Annual Meeting, here's a little poem that your editor sort of likes; written by the very famous **Author Unknown**:

DO YOU JUST BELONG?

Are you an active member,
The kind who would be missed,
Or are you just contented
That your name is on the list?

Do you attend the meetings
And mingle with the crowd,
Or would you rather stay at home
And crab both long and loud?

And do you take an active part
To help your group along,
Or are you satisfied to be
The kind to "just belong"?

And do you give a little time
And help to make things tick,
Or leave the work to just a few
And talk about the "clique"?

There's quite a program scheduled
That means success if done,
And it can be accomplished
With the help of everyone.

So go to all the meetings
And help with head and heart,
Don't be just another member
But take an active part.

Think it over, member.
Are we right or wrong?
Are you an active member
Or do you just belong?

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

That's not to say that "those who just belong" aren't valued as members. After all, as **John Milton** might have put it, **they also serve who only pay their dues**. But it is really refreshing to see lots of people getting involved.

And more fun too!

THE STRING OF PEARLS COMET PIN

· *A unique souvenir of a unique astronomical event* ·

May still be available from these locations:

Kingston

The Canadian Shop, 219 Princess St. 542-1115
CBM Postal Services PLUS, 95 Clarence St. 531-0884
Guthrie Graphics, 157 Wellington St. 544-7175
Queen's Campus Bookstore 545-2955
Wayfarer Books, 85 Princess St. 542-8615

Belleville

My Science Project, 180 N. Front St., #7 967-0120

A GREAT SUMMER FOR ASTRONOMY

By Bill Broderick

Summer 1994 was a great time for astronomy, at least within my sphere of activities—and, I hope, in yours too. The May 10 annular eclipse was a spectacle to be remembered with a great deal of pleasure. Gisela and I enjoyed it from a site in Presqu'ile Provincial Park along with Park staff, members of the Belleville Astronomy Club, and a good crowd of enthusiastic public.

Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 did its thing in July, providing a whole week—and then several more—of thrills and chills on the planet Jupiter. Going out evening after evening and seeing the evidence of new impacts was a tremendous experience. I managed to get some observing done almost every night and made quite a few sketches of Jupiter and its impact scars right at the telescope. (The only damper to this occasion was the mosquito epidemic, which to my mind was particularly bad this year.) My best view of Jupiter, though, was through a new telescope from Astrophysics (called "Fastmax") which was displayed at STARFEST. Wow! I felt as though I could reach out and touch it.



Photo: Joanne Burns

Speaking of STARFEST, I believe this one (number 13) may have been the biggest and best yet (Who says 13 is unlucky?). I drove up to Mount Forest on the Thursday, August 4, through variable cloudiness and some rain. The news reported severe storms in some areas that day. And it was cool (read C-O-L-D!). I spent the night in the motel in Mount Forest, then had to look for other accommodation in the morning because it (the motel) was all booked up for Friday and Saturday. But not to worry, I found a really nice bed-and-breakfast—the Blue Manor in Mount Forest—and it was not only more comfortable but more reasonably priced as well. If you're not the camping type, I heartily recommend the Blue Manor to you. There are probably some other B & B's around too; one just has to search these things out.

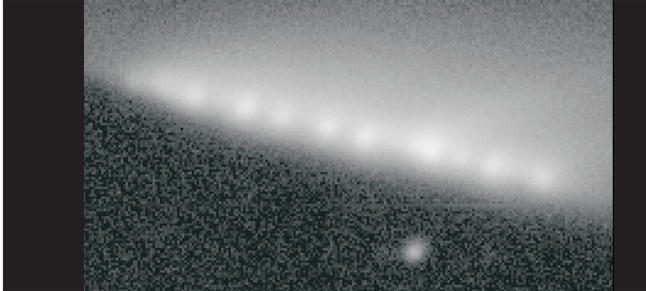
In spite of Thursday's weather, STARFEST continued its "tradition" of not being completely clouded or rained out. In fact, both Friday and Saturday nights were incredible! I got my superlative look at Jupiter through Astrophysics' new scope on Friday night and on both Friday and Saturday nights, got in a few peeks at a number of deep-sky objects through several large-to-huge telescopes. Being able to see the objects with nearly the clarity of observatory photographs was fantastic. Also, having the opportunity to observe with other people's telescopes can be eye-opening. I hate to say it but there are a lot of mediocre optics out there that might give better service as frisbees. Anyway, STARFEST and similar gatherings give one an opportunity to look through and evaluate various telescopes—which is definitely a good thing to do.

As summer draws to a close, one can at last spend a few hours at the telescope without the annoyance of mosquitos. I'm starting to get into the NGC list and look forward to the day (hopefully, not too far in the future) when I'll pick up our society's new NGC certificate, which recognizes those who manage to observe all 110 of the finest NGC objects as listed in the Observer's Handbook. Certificates are nice; but really, it's the experience of eye-balling all that stuff that's really important.

Well, I've told you about my summer. Now how about yours?

FAREWELL TO COMET SHOEMAKER-LEVY 9

By Bill Broderick



The String of Pearls Comet, SL9

gave us a brief but spectacular glimpse at one of the processes that formed the solar system and built the planets. They will probably help us to a better understanding of comets and of Jupiter itself. And of course, we have now seen—from a safe distance—what happens when comets and worlds collide. We can appreciate more fully what must have happened 65 million years ago at the end of the Cretaceous when a comet or asteroid slammed into the Earth and terminated the age of the dinosaurs.

In my telescope the impact areas on Jupiter have pretty well faded. But the memory of what I saw on the evening of July 18 and subsequently will remain etched in my mind long after the Jovian winds have done their work of erasure and the planet has resumed its pre-impact appearance.

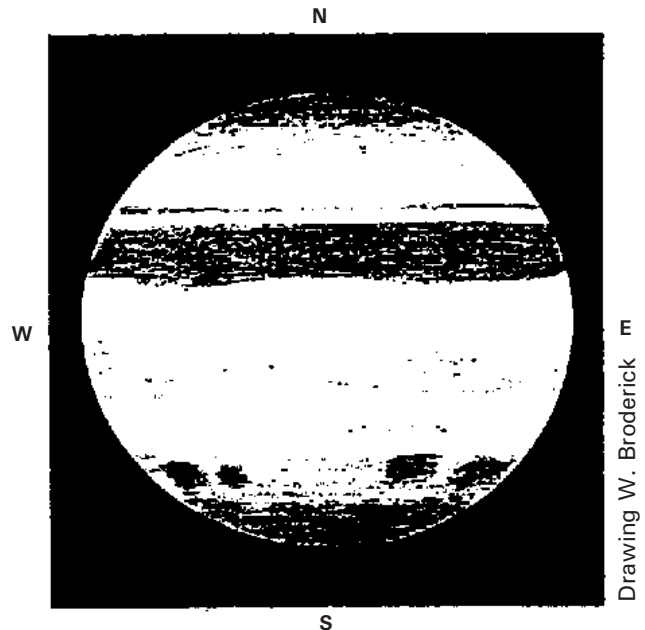
Carolyn Shoemaker stated in one of her media interviews (Maclean's, July 18), "I have always daydreamed about finding the comet of the century—one of the great visual comets with a tail streaking across the heavens that everyone can see with the naked eye. I haven't found one like that and neither has anyone else. But I do think we found the comet of the century, nevertheless."

I am sure we would all agree with that assessment. As David Levy said in his STARFEST talk, this was everybody's comet. Although very few of us got to actually see the comet itself, almost every amateur astronomer with access to a telescope must have seen the impact areas on Jupiter. Now we await the articles, photos and video tapes, etc., that will shortly be appearing, so that we may all share more fully in this incredible event.

Hats off to a great comet-hunting team: Eugene Shoemaker, geologist turned astronomer; Carolyn Shoemaker, housewife and teacher turned astronomer; and to the amateur who has indeed made it to the big time—David Levy! In the words of Terence Dickinson, another well-known individual in amateur astronomical circles, he has become the most famous amateur astronomer on the planet.

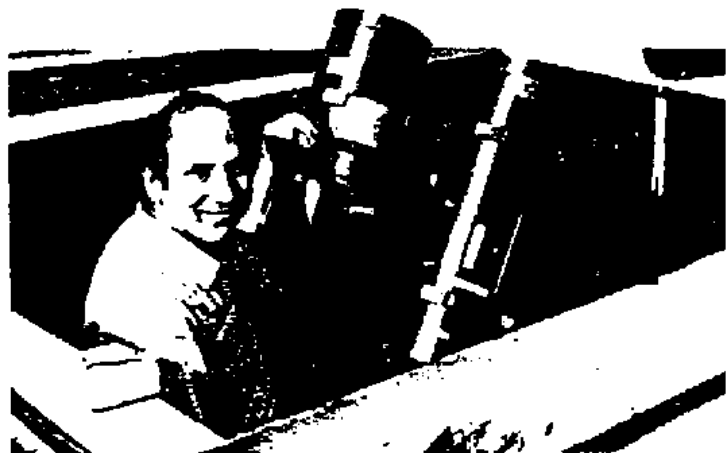
One of the great scientific events of the twentieth century took place during the week of July 16 to 22. A nice thing about this particular event is that one of the key players was not a major league scientist but an amateur astronomer—albeit someone a little more dedicated than most of us.

The impacts of the various fragments of Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 on Jupiter left more than a ring of holes (if that's what they were) in the Jovian cloud-belts. They



Jupiter, July 26, 9:45 p.m. EDT

Drawing W. Broderick



JIM SCOTT PHOTO

(5) *The King of Comet-Hunters, at home in his backyard observatory*

NEWS AND NOTES

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome FRANK HITCHENS of Arden, who has transferred to Kingston Centre from Halifax. Great to have you with us, Frank.

PRODUCT NOTE

One of the "star attractions" (pun intended) at this year's STARFEST was a new telescope by Astrophysics. Dubbed "FASTMAX", this appears to be a 7-inch Newtonian-type instrument with enclosed optics, presumably a Maksutov. I was able to get a look at Jupiter through this instrument and felt for the first time in my life that I was really seeing it. Detail was resolved with incredible clarity. It was just fantastic! Not only the cloud belts, spots and festoons, but also the SL9 Impact areas. (Was it the telescope or was it the seeing? We had two really terrific nights of seeing, possibly the best ever recorded at STARFEST.) Anyway, the "FASTMAX" is not yet on the market; Astrophysics is simply experimenting with how they can offer refractor-quality optics for reflector-quality prices. I think this telescope would be a really welcome addition to their product lines, and certainly look forward to an opportunity to check it out further.

A NEW NATURE STORE IN KINGSTON

Christine Kulyk reports that a new nature store has opened in Kingston. It's BIRDERS NATURE STORE, which advertises itself as "wild bird feeding specialists." They also sell binoculars, telescopes, books and other items, and would be pleased to order items for their customers if they're not in stock. The store is located at 79 Brock Street, Kingston K7L 1R8. Telephone is 546-6777.

DUES ARE DUE

HEY, IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN!

WHAT TIME?

RASC DUES TIME!

**OH, YEAH! WE GOTTA RENEW
OUR RASC MEMBERSHIP AFTER
SEPTEMBER 30!**

**THAT'S RIGHT! OCTOBER 1
STARTS ANOTHER MEMBERSHIP
YEAR IN THE RASC!**

**YEP! AND KNOW WHAT? DUES
ARE SAME AS LAST YEAR. JUST
\$45 FOR ORDINARY MEMBERS,
\$25 FOR YOUTH, AND \$11.25
FOR ASSOCIATES!**

**AND DON'T FORGET, LIFE
MEMBERSHIP IS JUST \$900--
YOU NEVER HAVE TO THINK
ABOUT PAYING DUES AGAIN!**

**RIGHT! LET'S WRITE OUT OUR
CHEQUES RIGHT AWAY TO THE
RASC, KINGSTON CENTRE. KIM
HAY WILL BE LOOKING FOR THEM.**



THE STRING OF PEARLS COMET PIN

*Specially created to commemorate this July's historic
encounter between planet and comet*

An original design, the colourful $\frac{3}{4}$ " by $\frac{3}{8}$ " lapel pin depicts:

- Jupiter in orange and almond
- comet fragments & highlighting in gold-coloured metal
- a midnight blue background

\$5.50 each

(Quantity discounts available)

For more information or to order,
phone Christine Kulyk at (000) 000-0000, or send
cheque or money order (payable to Mary Patton) to:
Comet Pin, XXXXXX, Kingston, ON XXX XXX.
Please add 8% Ontario PST and \$2 shipping per pin.

Concept by Christine Kulyk, Carole Greig and Mary Patton
Original Design by Carole Greig



Royal Astronomical Society
of Canada
Kingston Centre
P.O. Box 1793
Kingston Ontario K7L 5J6
Canada

Kingston Centre-Promotional Items (inventory as of Aug 13/94)

Black RASC touques (\$16.00 each)

2 RASC turtle neck sweaters (1 black/1 blue \$20.00 each)

4 1994 Vancouver Centre Calendars left. Selling for \$2.00 each.
They are black and white pictures of various Nebulas and Galaxies

Also available from the National Promotional Items there are:

RASC stickers for \$1.25 each

RASC mugs (White & Blue with Crest) for \$4.00 each

RASC Keychains (White & Blue with Crest) for \$2.00 each

NOTE FROM THE TREASURER

Membership season is upon us again! Dues are due on October 1, 1994 and are good until Sept 30, 1995. There will be no price increase for this years dues!

Please hand in your dues soon to Kim Hay, Treasurer. Avoid the RUSH!!

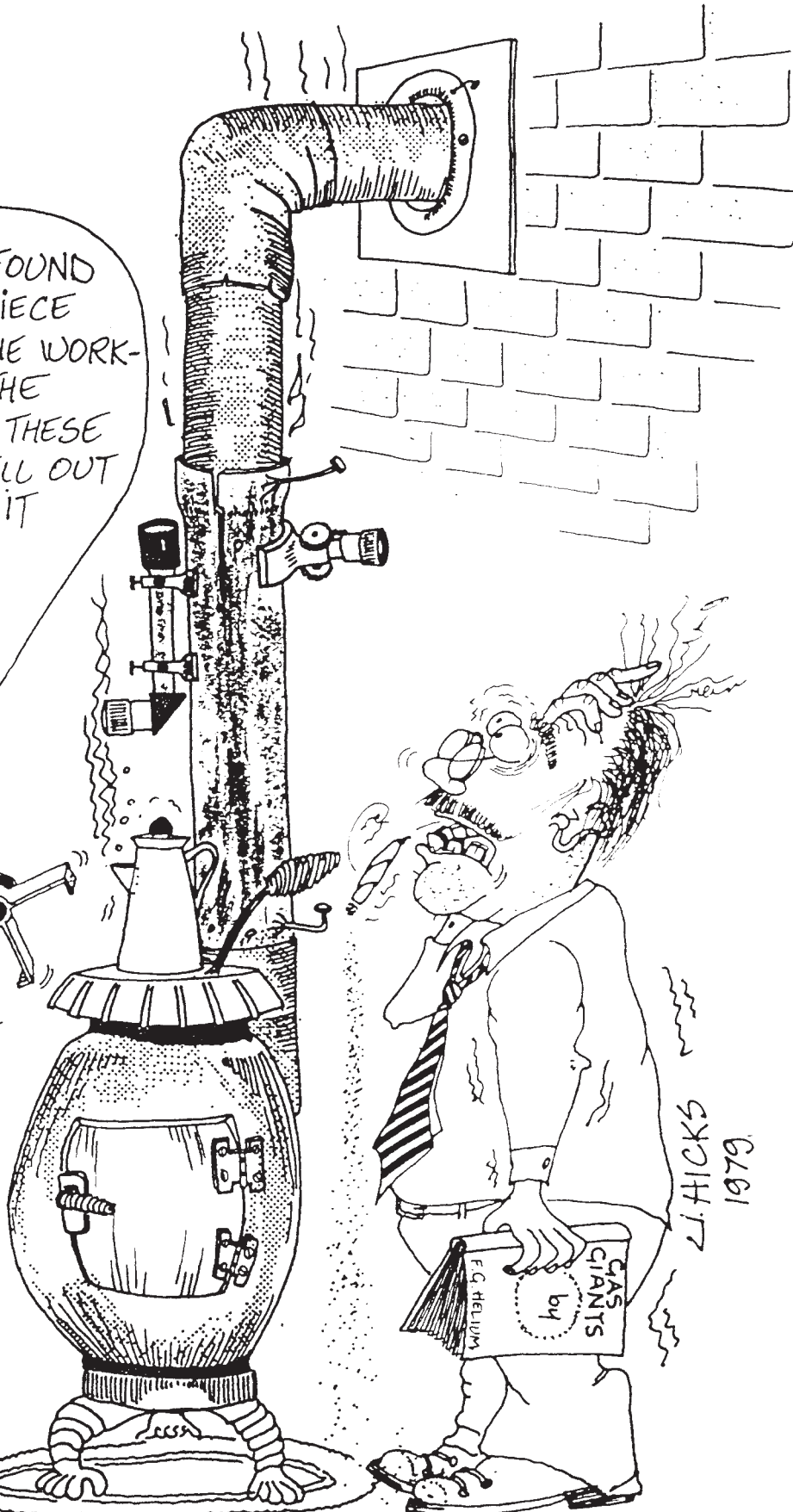
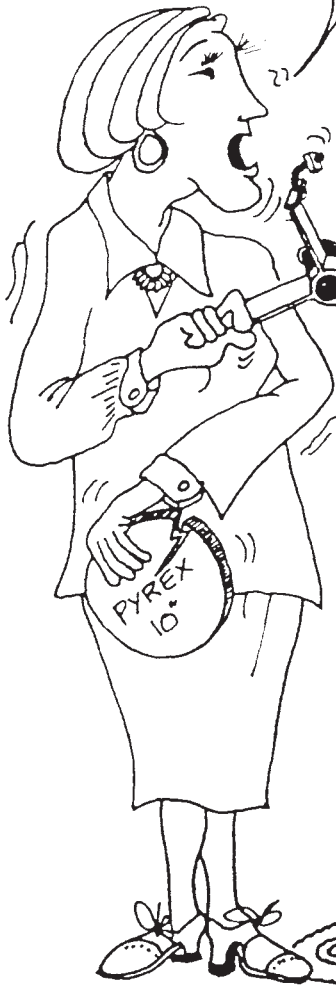
Prices: Regular Membership \$45.00
Associate Membership \$11.25
Life Membership \$900.00

Thank You all for your co-operation.

Kim Hay
Treasurer
Kingston Centre-RASC

HORACE'S SCOPE, ASTRONOMER

GEORGE!!! I FOUND THE PERFECT PIECE OF PIPE IN THE WORK-SHOP TO FIX THE STOVE... BUT THESE TWO THINGS FELL OUT AFTER I PUT IT UP.....



J. HICKS
1979